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sometimes used for an insolent or impertinent speech? I should be glad to know the etymology of the word, or any other instance of its use.

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CORRECTION.

In the review of M. GASTON PARIS' 'Extraits de la Chanson de Roland' (MOD. LANG. NOTES iv, col. 45) the statement is made, apropos of the treatment of *osberc*, "M. PARIS does not seem to have been aware that this explanation had already been offered by SUCHIER in GRÖBER's 'Grundriss,' vol. i, p. 664, § 106." Too late for a rectification in the February number, I discovered (with regret for the oversight, though fortunately the harm was not great) a foot-note appended to the close of the article in question (*Rom.* xvii, p. 429), in which M. PARIS calls attention to p. 664 of the 'Grundriss,' stating that his article was written before he had read SUCHIER's work. I may take the liberty of quoting here, from a private letter received from M. PARIS, a passage relieving M. GRAND of a part of the responsibility assigned to him in the review, as well as signaling the above mentioned oversight:—

"Je vous remercie infiniment de votre article sur mes *Extraits*, et surtout de vos corrections. Je vais les comparer minutieusement à l'original; et j'en ferai profiter ma prochaine édition en vous remerciant comme je le dois. Vous avez tort d'attribuer à M. GRAND les fautes du glossaire; il n'est responsable que des omissions, qui sont peu nombreuses et graves, car il n'a fait que le relevé des mots. Vous dites, à propos de mon article sur *osberc*, que je parais ne pas avoir connu celui de M. SUCHIER; voyez cependant la note de la p. 429."

The interesting note referred to reads as follows:—Cet article était écrit quand j'ai lu le travail, remarquable à tant d'égards, de M. SUCHIER, *Le français, le provençal et leurs*

dialectes (*Grundriss der romanischen Philologie*, t. iii). L'auteur a remarqué aussi la forme provençale de *osberc*: "Si, dit-il (p. 664), la Chanson de Roland a vraiment l'Anjou pour patrie, on s'explique d'autant plus facilement *osberc*, au lieu de l'habituel *halberc*, par l'*ausberc* des dialectes provençaux voisins: le nom sera venu avec la chose." Mais *osberc* n'est pas propre au *Roland* (voy. Schirling; les notations *auberc*, *aubert* sont dues à l'influence de *hauberc*, *haubert*), non plus qu'*elme*, et si l'on peut admettre que ces mots venaient particulièrement du Poitou, ils se sont répandus dans toute la France du nord, sans détruire d'ailleurs leurs concurrents nationaux, *halberc* et *helme*.

H. A. TODD.

SHELLEY'S LATEST BIOGRAPHER.

Shelley: the Man and the Poet. By FELIX RABBE. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. 1888. 8vo. pp. viii, 411. Translated from the French.

The personality of SHELLEY, that "beautiful and ineffectual angel," is so fascinating that biographers, in attempting to relate and pass judgment upon the unfortunate occurrences of his life, find it peculiarly difficult to steer a true course between the Scylla of inordinate eulogy and the Charybdis of brutality. Most of his biographers appear to be beguiled, by the idealizing spirit which they have caught from SHELLEY, into a somewhat wavering application of the ordinary rules of social conduct. It is felt that a spirit so unselfish, so magnanimous, so sympathetic, so beautiful, is capable of no very serious wrong,—that such a spirit is a law unto himself,

"neither is it lawful

That he should stoop to any other law,"

This feeling is fully shared by M. RABBE, who, felicitously enough, applies to SHELLEY at the outset the fine saying of BERLIOZ: "Now it is exceptional natures who lead the world; and it is well that it should be so, for by their struggles and their pain they purchase light and movement for humanity."

The opposite view of SHELLEY,—the vulgar view of the British public of his time,—was expressed by the English officer who is said to have greeted the poet in the post-office at Pisa

*Since I offered the query on this word, "Two Fifteenth Century Cookery Books" (E. E. T. Soc.) have come to my hand. Here we have *gauncelye* as a sauce containing pepper, ginger, saffron, onions (or garlic) and parsley. The glossary (s. v.) cites GODEFRÖY: "*janse, fance, gance*, sorte de sauce," and adds: "It would almost appear to be a sauce for a goose; compare '*gances*, anesers silvestres': Ducange." This would agree with HENRYSON's use of the word; though in these cookery books it is not served with a goose but with eels and hens.

W. H. B.

with the words, "So you are that damn'd atheist Shelley," accompanying the words with a blow of his cane. This rude indictment has been formulated and expanded to the extent of two volumes by MR. JEAFFRESON. While such brutality on the part of critic or biographer must be resented by all liberal-minded readers, it is unfortunately true that the thorough-going justification of SHELLEY, in all his relations, rolls a great burden of proof upon the counsel for the defence. This burden, which even PROFESSOR DOWDEN did not carry with perfect ease, proves quite crushing to the weaker frame of M. RABBE,—or would prove so, were it not considerably lightened for him by the large tolls levied at the French frontier upon such moral importations. That SHELLEY should desert Harriet when life became difficult with her and when Mary was so incomparably more attractive to him, somehow appears much more reasonable to the flexible intelligence of the Frenchman than to the rigid moral sensibility of the Englishman! It is then no matter for surprise that SHELLEY's French translator turns out to be his staunchest admirer and most loyal biographer.

This uncompromising championship puts the reader on his guard. One feels that M. RABBE holds a brief for SHELLEY, and that he holds it not so much in behalf of SHELLEY the poet as in behalf of SHELLEY the revolutionist. Nor can it be said of this biographer, as of PROFESSOR DOWDEN, that he furnishes data for the correction of any possible misjudgments of his own. Thus, in support of his unquestioning assumption that SHELLEY's desertion of Harriet was justified by previous unfaithfulness on her part, M. RABBE adduces no evidence beyond SHELLEY's subsequent asseverations to SOUTHEY and to Mary of his innocence, and his obscure hints touching certain "horrors of unutterable villainy that led to this dark, dreadful death." But M. RABBE gives data enough to indicate considerable obtuseness or perversity on his own part in the interpretation of the evidence. How, for instance, can any biographer fail to put the most natural interpretation upon the attempted assassination of SHELLEY at Tremadoc; upon the recollections which, according to THORN-

TON HUNT, "pursued him like an Orestes;" upon his story of the mysterious lady, "young, handsome, and of noble connections," who appeared to him in 1816, on the night before he left London for Switzerland, made a tender confession to him, thenceforth followed him in all his pilgrimages, and finally died at Naples "to SHELLEY's inconsolable grief." If we know anything of the workings of SHELLEY's mind, we know that his powerful imagination could convince him of the outward reality of its subjective creations. And it seems equally evident that, after Harriet's suicide, he was subject to fits of very natural but half-concealed remorse which at times made life burdensome, and which are psychologically quite reconcilable with his intellectual conviction of his real innocence toward that unhappy woman.

This moral obtuseness, which M. RABBE shares with so many writers upon SHELLEY, is not compensated by any perceptible critical faculty. It is a little startling to find a cultivated Frenchman so uncompromising a Shelleyite as to perceive in this poet's satirical writings an improvement upon "the incisiveness of Swift and the airiness of Aristophanes." Apropos of that disgusting farrago of dismal nonsense entitled "Swellfoot the Tyrant," M. RABBE has the fatuity to write as follows (with much more of the same sort): "The present time, which may be called the age of parody, may bow down before SHELLEY, and acknowledge in him the Shakespeare of the art." It would be impossible for any German making a *Fachstudium* of SHELLEY to go beyond this!

These reservations being made, it remains to be said that this is a very interesting and useful book, giving us in one volume,—and in plain language,—the cream of PROFESSOR DOWDEN's less simple and much more extended narrative. While it cannot be compared in point of literary skill with SYMOND's captivating little book in the *English Men of Letters* series, it is much more valuable as a repertory of facts about SHELLEY,—though its value in this respect is much impaired by the absence of an index. In short, the book is little more than a rather skilful compilation from the various authorities; but the author deserves our gratitude for allowing these authorities, whenever possible, to speak for themselves.

Thus all the most interesting passages in the poet's life are told by means of citations from his letters or diary, or from the narrative of MRS. SHELLEY, HOGG, PEACOCK, MEDWIN, and TRELAWNEY, ample quotations being also made from the biographies of ROSSETTI and PROFESSOR DOWDEN.

The work of the translator, MRS. CASHEL HOEY, has been well done. The English typography (by CHARLES DICKENS and EVANS) is decidedly below the level of the best American work, and the proof-reading is not first-rate. At p. 75 there is a reference to an imaginary frontispiece, and at p. 81 to an imaginary "Appendix ii;" the running headlines are frequently useless and misleading, and there are too many typographical errors,—the reference to CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN as "a German disciple of Godwin" (p. 226) perhaps not being one of them.

SHELLEY'S definitive biographer,—who must unite the sympathy and enthusiasm of SYMONDS and SWINBURNE with the good-sense and perspicacity of ARNOLD—is yet to come. The coming of such a biographer is by no means to be reckoned upon; meanwhile the proof afforded by this book that the fame of SHELLEY has extended beyond the limits of English speech, is cheering to the lovers of perfection. Not alone among the countrymen of ZOLA and of BALZAC, but among ourselves, there is good reason to hope that this biography may win many new readers for SHELLEY. And the idealist may perhaps be permitted to believe that every such genuine reader will bring us a step nearer to that remote ideal of social justice, in the interest of which this radiant poet engaged single-handed in the pathetic endeavor to shatter the present frame of things, "and mould it nearer to the heart's desire."

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DANISH ORTHOGRAPHY.

De nye Retskrivningsregler. Meddelelse fra Ministeriet for Kirke og Undervisningsvæsenet af 24 de. Juli, 1888. *Kjøbenhavn.* B. Pio, 1888.

Store og smaa Bogstaver. Et Indlæg i *Retskrivningsspørgsmaalet* af ERNST VON DER RECKE. *Kjøbenhavn,* Gyldendal, 1888.

For many years the subject of orthography has been a thorn in the flesh of the Danish people. Numerous attempts have been made by commissions and individuals to meet the demand for a consistent method of orthography, but to each new attempt so many objections have been raised that at last it seemed almost hopeless that we should ever arrive at a satisfactory result. In February, 1885, the Ministry of Religion and Instruction received an announcement from the Pedagogical Society to the effect that that body had been unable to introduce a common system of orthography throughout the country, and suggesting that the Ministry take steps to effect this important change. As a result of this appeal the Ministry undertook to make the attempt under the following conditions, set forth in their report:

I. That the Ministry shall cause a short system of orthography to be compiled.

II. That the Ministry shall authorise an orthographical dictionary.

III. That the Ministry shall in the future authorise and recommend only those books in which the recognized orthography is closely followed.

IV. That the Ministry shall provide that books published by the government, especially Bibles and psalm-books, be subjected to an orthographical revision.

A commission composed of some of the most prominent philologists and teachers of Denmark was promptly appointed by the Ministry, and the pamphlet which it is our purpose to notice is the result of their labors. Although the new system of orthography as a whole is regarded with favor by the majority of Danish students and teachers, there are some points that have been severely criticised by many.

The vexed question of initial capitals in common nouns is disposed of in the easiest manner by postponing its settlement. It is stated in the pamphlet that although a majority of the commission were in favor of making this radical change, yet in view of its great importance and the variety of opinion at present existing, it seemed best to wait for fuller testimony. How fierce is the opposition to